

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

Public

DATE: September 2, 2015

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Chief Kevin Treadway

CC: Josh Copley, Jerene Watson, Barbara Goodrich, Leadership Team

SUBJECT: BICYCLES TRAVELING WRONG WAY ON ONE WAY STREETS

This is in response to the request for information regarding wrong way bicycle travel at the September 1, 2015 City Council meeting.

DISCUSSION

The question was asked whether riding a bicycle the wrong direction on a one way street (for example Beaver or San Francisco) was against the law. The answer is yes.

Regulations governing bicycle laws can be found under the Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 28, section 812. This section basically states that bicyclists riding on a roadway or shoulder are subject to applicable traffic laws. So it is clear, riding a bicycle the wrong direction on a one way street is not legal and is enforceable.

On August 1, 2015, the Flagstaff Police Department launched a three month bicycle safety initiative. This initiative involves both public education of our community, and increased enforcement of both vehicles and bicycles especially in the south side downtown area. The initiative was designed following a review of last year's bicycle involved collisions. Between the start of August and the end of October 2014, the Flagstaff Police Department responded to 29 collisions involving bicyclists. Once again, the 2015 initiative is geared toward reducing the number of collisions involving bicyclists during this same time period.

At the end of July, this initiative was presented during an in-service to all officers on the department. This in-service, provided by Sgt. James and members of our traffic enforcement squad included an overview of the applicable Title 28 laws that apply to both bicyclists and vehicles when travelling together on the roadway.

On August 2, 2015, the Arizona Daily Sun printed a large front page article identifying the initiative, educating the reader on applicable laws, and defining local resources available to learn more about bicycle safety.

Around this same time, we proposed a new fine deferral program where bicyclists cited for a traffic violation may apply for a bicycle safety course (much like a driver's safety course). City Court is still working on the logistics to get this program up and running. Volunteers, including Officer Dave Needham have been identified to teach the course once it is available.

Since August 1, 2015, officers of the Flagstaff Police Department have issued 29 citations to bicyclists and an additional 11 written warnings. For comparison, in 2014 during the same time frame, we had issued 7 bicycle citations. In August, 2014, we investigated 11 bicycle vs. vehicle collisions, and in August 2015, we investigated seven. Vehicles have also been stopped, however it is very difficult to determine through our records system the number of vehicles stopped specifically for violating a bicycle related code.

I am confident that if our officers witness a bicyclist travelling the wrong way on a one way street and they are available to conduct the stop, they will do so.

RECOMMENDATION / CONCLUSION

This report is for information only.